

REPORT / RECOMMENDATION



To: Mayor and Council

Agenda Item #: V. B.

From: Jeff Siems, Fire Marshal

Action ☐

Date: Oct. 1, 2013

Discussion ☐

Information ☒

Subject: Proclamation Declaring Fire Prevention Week

Action Requested:

Information / Background:

Fire Prevention Week was established by President Woodrow Wilson in 1920 to commemorate the Great Chicago Fire, which killed more than 250 people, left 100,000 homeless and destroyed more than 17,400 structures on Oct. 8-9, 1871. It also commemorates another large fire, the Peshtigo Fire, the most devastating forest fire in American History. The fire, which also occurred Oct. 7, 1871, burned 16 towns, killing 1,152 people and destroying 1.2 million acres in Wisconsin.

Fire Prevention Week has been observed every year since 1922, spanning Sunday through Saturday of the week in which Oct. 9 falls. Fire Prevention Week is reportedly the longest running public health and safety observance on record.

This year's Fire Prevention Week theme is "Prevent Kitchen Fires," and stresses the importance cooking safely and how to prevent cooking fires and is recognized Oct. 6-12, 2013.

In 2010, U.S. fire departments responded to 369,500 home structure fires, resulting in 2,640 deaths and \$6.9 billion in damage. Residential Building Cooking Fires have increased 3 percent nationally to 166,600 fires per year between 2007 and 2011, according to the U.S. Fire Administration. Additionally, numerous other kitchen and cooking fires go unreported. These fires result in 400 civilian deaths, 5,080 injuries and \$853 million in direct damages. Two out of every five home fires begin in the kitchen.

The Edina Fire Department recommends the following tips to prevent kitchen fires:

- Stay in the kitchen when you are frying, grilling, broiling or boiling food.
- If you must leave the room, even for a short period, turn off the stove.

- When you are simmering, baking or roasting food, check it regularly, stay in the home and use a timer to remind you.
- If you have young children, use the stove's back burners whenever possible. Keep children and pets at least three feet away from the stove.
- When you cook, wear clothing with tight-fitting or short sleeves.
- Keep potholders, oven mitts, wooden utensils, paper and plastic bags, towels, and anything else that can burn, away from your stovetop.
- Clean up food and grease from burners and stovetops.

Visit www.FirePreventionWeek.org for more information and tips about home escape planning and practice.

**A PROCLAMATION
FOR FIRE PREVENTION WEEK**

WHEREAS, the City of Edina is committed to ensuring the safety and security of all those living in and visiting our City; and

WHEREAS, fire is a serious public safety concern both locally and nationally, and homes are the locations where people are at greatest risk from fire; and

WHEREAS, cooking is the leading cause of home fires in the United States and home fires killed more than 2,500 people in the United States in 2011, according to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA); and

WHEREAS, two of every five home fires start in the kitchen and unattended equipment was a factor in one-third of the reported cooking fires; and

WHEREAS, 57 percent of reported non-fatal home cooking fire injuries occurred when the victims tried to fight the fire themselves; and

WHEREAS, Edina's residents should stay in the kitchen when frying food on the stovetop, keep a three-foot kid-free zone around cooking areas and keep anything that can catch fire away from stove tops; and

WHEREAS, working smoke alarms cut the risk of dying in reported home fires in half; and

WHEREAS, residents who have planned and practiced a home fire escape plan are more prepared and will therefore be more likely to survive a fire; and

WHEREAS, Edina's first responders are dedicated to reducing the occurrence of home fires and home fire injuries through prevention and protection education; and

WHEREAS, Edina's residents are responsive to public education measures and are able to take personal steps to increase their safety from fire, especially in their homes; and

WHEREAS, the 2013 Fire Prevention Week theme, "Prevent Kitchen Fires!" effectively serves to remind us to stay alert and use caution when cooking to reduce the risk of kitchen fires.

THEREFORE, I, James B. Hovland, Mayor of Edina, do hereby proclaim October 6-12, 2013 as Fire Prevention Week throughout the City, and I urge all the people of Edina by checking their kitchens for fire hazards and using safe cooking practices during Fire Prevention Week 2013, and to support the many public safety activities and efforts of Edina's fire and emergency services.

James B. Hovland, Mayor